

# MOORE MAJOR.

*Curia Specialis tent. die Lunæ xxix<sup>no</sup>.*

*Maii 1682. Annoq; Regni Regis  
Caroli Secundi Angl', &c. xxxiiii<sup>ta</sup>.*

This Court doth desire Dr. Moore to Print  
his Sermon Preached yesterday at the *Guild-  
Hall* Chappel before the Lord Mayor and  
Aldermen of this City.

*Wagstaffe.*

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

Lord Mayor,

AND THE

Court of ALDERMEN,

AT

GUILD-HALL Chappel,

ON

The 28th of May, 1682.

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By JOHN MOORE, D. D.

Chaplain to the Right Honorable *Heneage* Earl of  
*Nottingham*, Lord High Chancellor of *England*.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the Bishops Head in  
*St. Paul's Church-Yard*. 1682.





To the Right Honorable Sir *John Moore* Lord Mayor, and the Court of Aldermen of the City of London.

My LORD,

**T**HE Meekness, Peace, and Charity, of which our Saviour was so Zealous a Preacher, and so great an Example, seem to be in a manner lost in the heats, bitterness, and noise, with which men manage their Disputes about his holy Religion: as if the Character of a true Christian was to be taken rather from the contentiousness of his Spirit, and his skill in Controversy, than the Purity of his Mind and Conversation. When yet nothing can bring a greater disparagement upon Christianity, and prove more fatal to the Professors of it, than to make it the occasion of those Evils and Mischiefs among Men, and of that disturbance in the World, which God purposely intended it should allay and extinguish.

It.

*It was my design in this Discourse, which in obedience to your Commands, I now make Public, to take men off from their furious debates about Points, often, not material to be decided, and earnestly to press them unto the exercise of those Primitive Vertues, upon which our Religion has always laid so much stress, and which our Lord hath so plainly declared to be the indispensable conditions of our Salvation: by shewing that all necessary Christian Doctrines have a natural tendency to that Godliness, which is now too generally neglected. And I am the more bold to prefix your Lordships name to it; because you are known to be so fair a Pattern of that Practical Religion I recommend, both in your private life as a Christian; and in your Public Capacity as a Magistrate.*

*I am, My Lord,*

*Your Lordships most humble  
and obedient Servant*

*John Moore.*

[ 1 ]

A

# SERMON

Preached before the

## Lord Mayor, &c.

May 28. 1682.

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1 TIM. VI. 3.

*And to the Doctrine which is according  
to Godliness.*

**W**Hen we consider there never  
was any Religion in the World,  
which did so earnestly recom-  
mend, and so strictly enjoin Godliness, as  
the Christian Religion has done, and yet  
that so little of it do's appear in the lives of  
Christians, we must conclude, that there  
are either great defects in the Religion, or  
faults in the Professors of it: we must either  
say there is not a sufficiency in the means

B

Chri-

Christianity do's prescribe and afford towards the attainment of true Piety and Virtue ; or else that the blame is to be laid upon them, who having undertaken the Christian Profession, do neglect, or despise the means and instruments provided by their Religion to make them Holy here, and happy for ever.

And it will not be hard to determin on which side the fault lies ; for God and Religion have not been wanting to Men<sup>e</sup> but Men have been wanting to themselves. There being nothing required in our Religion as our Duty, and a necessary Condition of our Happiness, which is above our strength assisted with that Grace, which every one may obtaine who sincerely prays to God for it. (a) *Therefore if men will not make use of that Grace, which God so plentifully poures forth upon all, it is but fit and equal, that they impute their defects to themselves.* And few have had the boldness directly to charge their Vices upon God ; as if he had denied them power and opportunitys to have been better.

Ἡ ἰσχυρὸς χά-  
ρις ἐκχευομένη,  
πάντας ὑπὲρ  
ἰσχύος καὶ ἁπλῶς  
πάντες, οἱ ὅτι ἐκ  
ἐξέλουσιν ἑαυ-  
τοὺς καὶ δι-  
ορῶντες, ἐαυτοῖς  
ἐπιτιμῶν τῶν ἁμαρ-  
τιῶν ἐν ἡμῶν  
ἀνὰ τὴν ἀποκατά-  
στασιν τῆς πόλεως.  
S. Chrysost.  
in Joan. c. i.

They will lay their faults upon themselves, but with some privat reserves and Suggestions,

tions, that those faults are very pardonable ones ; as being neither much offensive to God, nor plainly repugnant to the state of good men. So the Common way has been for men to frame such a model of Religion to themselves, as might sute with a vitious life, and help to quiet the complaints of an uneasy conscience. Thus when Persons are debauch'd in their morals, they are apt presently to turn Hereticks in their Faith. It having been observed, that nothing is more usual, than for men to shelter the monstrous impiety of their lives, under some or as notoriously impious Opinion ; and to depart as far in their belief from the true Doctrins of Christ ; as they had before Strayed in their practice from his Holy precepts.

*Sed vitam quidem luxuriosam, sententiam autem impiam ad velamen malitiae ipsorum nomine abutuntur, S. Iren. p. 122. Difficile hariticum inveniri qui diligat castitatem, Hieron. in Osee c. 9.*

Thus some men have justified a wicked life, by denying the differences between Good and Evil ; and others have excused it, by pretending all their actions are under a fatal decree, and come necessarily to pass. Some again make the performance of Obedience to Gods Laws very needless, by disowning his providence and care of the World. Others would exempt themselves from the ties of godliness and virtue by fan-

fyng their Religion to consist only in true believing: and others place it all in outward shew and Ceremony. Some again hope they may enjoy both the brutish pleasures of this life and the pure ones of the next, and carry their sins a long with them to Heaven, by so exalting and extending Gods mercy unto obstinately Impenitent Sinners, as to deny both his Justice and Truth: and others cut the sinews of Religion by calling in question the Resurrection of the Dead, and the rewards of the Life to come.

So *Simon Magus*, that infamous Magician, and Founder of all the Heresys which followed him, that he might serve his vain Glory and Ambition did covet the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and hoped to purchase them by Money; he also boasted that he himself was God; and appeared in *Samaria* as the Father, among the Jews as the Son, and to the Gentiles as the holy Spirit: he also deny'd that Man had any liberty of will; or that there was any necessity of good Works, So the *Nicolaitans*, for a cover to their abominable Lusts, taught there ought to be Community of Wives, and that to commit Fornication, and to eat meats offer'd

to

*Irenæi lib. 1.  
c. 20.*

*Iren. l. 1 c. 21.*

to Idols were things indifferent. Thus *Me-*  
*nander* and *Marcion* disowned Gods being  
 the maker of the World, ascribing that  
 work of Omnipotency to Angels. Thus al-  
 so *Himenæus* and *Philetus* denied the Resur-  
 rection. Justin Mart.  
Apol. 2. p. 70.

Some of these ungodly Men lived in the  
 days of the Apostles, of whom St. *Jude* Jude v. 4.  
 saies, *they turned the grace of God into lascivi-*  
*ousness denying the only Lord God, and our*  
*Lord Jesus Christ.* Now what in the Primi-  
 tive Church was the disease only of some  
 few Men, seems in our unhappy age, to  
 have been a plague, which has generally  
 infected, and spread its malignity over the  
 Face of the Christian World.

Great numbers in these times, as they  
 have given themselves up to the filthiest of  
 the vices among the Ancient Hereticks; so  
 have they espoused the worst of their Opini-  
 ons to defend them.

If *Cerintus* and *Ebion* of all the Books of Iren. l. 1. c. 26.  
Epiphani. hæ-  
ref. 3, & 10.  
 the *New Testament*, would only receive the  
 Gospel of St. *Mathew*; because it was writ in  
*Hebrew*: we have them who do affirm that Leviath. p. 209.  
 the *whole Bible* derives all its Authority  
 from the Civil Magistrate; and that it is  
 the



the legislative power of the Common wealth,  
which giveth it the force of a Law,

Clem. Alex.  
Strom. 3.  
Epiphani. Hær.  
7.

If *Carpocrates* declared that there was nothing simply and absolutely good or evil in its self, but only according to the opinion of Men, it is well known who has published the very same Doctrine.

Epiph. Hær.  
24. & 31.

If *Basilides* and *Valentinus* contended for the lawfulness of the promiscuous use of Women, and many wives; there is a Pretender to Reformation among us, who that he may give some Reputation to *Bastardy*, and free it from that *Illegitimation*, which constantly the Christian Church has fixt upon it, has in Print affirm'd, *that carnal knowledg between Persons not prohibited by the moral Law, tho, without Contract, Licence, Wittnesses or Minister, is a Marriage Lawful, Holy, and Indissoluble according to the Law of God.* To advance which Assertion he has arraigned not only the Laws of our own Nation, but of the whole Christian, and I may say, Pagan World too. And what well becomes the Publishers of false and dangerous Opinions, he has managed his bad cause with great confidence of the Truth of it, and with as much contempt of all that

are

Moral Marriage, lib. 3. p. 71.



are of another mind ; there being scarce Lib. 2. c. 11.  
 a profession of men among us, whom he has  
 not treated with disrespect and ill language :  
 nay, he will not allow that the present Mi-  
 nisters of the Gospel can produce any bet-  
 ter evidence of their Divine Commission,  
 than those who claim under *Mahomet* ; and Lib. 2. p. 145.  
 chargeth it as a Wickedness upon the *Trans-*  
*lators* of the Bible, that in their false *Trans-*  
*lation* only, the *seventh Comandment* does  
*forbid Adultry*, and the *tenth* the *Coveting*  
*our Neighbours Wife*. Now let the People  
 see what a kind of Reformation they are to  
 expect in Church and State, if ever the Ma-  
 nagement of it fall into such mens hands,  
 who are daily complaining of the great want  
 of it ; and quarreling with every thing in the  
 present Establishment.

If some hundred years ago there appeared Scriptum scholae Parisien.  
 in the World *Evangelium Aeternum* a Blas- Edit. Wolfgang. Wissenburgh.  
 phemous Book with a specious Title, which  
 pretended to be a far more perfect Gospel  
 than that of our Saviours ; and that in less  
 than fifty years it would cause it to be laid  
 aside ; we have also a Gospel collected out  
 of the Works of a late Cardinal, the Doc- Cardinal Pel-  
lavin.  
 trins whereof are as much according to the  
 flesh

flesh and the lusts thereof, as those of our Lords are according to Godliness. If there were false Apostles who would have tied the burden of Jewish Ceremonies about the necks of the first Christians, are there not also at this day a considerable party of Men, who by superadding a multitude of positive, unuseful and Arbitrary Constitutions to Christianity, have renderd it almost insupportable. The Humility and the Devotion, the Patience and the Contentment, the Charity and the Contempt of the World, and the Forgiveness of Enemies and Injuries, which made the Primitive Christians famous among their very Persecutors, being stifled and even buried under so much of pompous Dress and superfluous Garnishment.

If *Simon* would have bought the Powers of the Holy Ghost, are there not now Men who sell Pardons of Sin? insomuch that if a Man have money enough to answer for his Sins, and do not transgress beyond the Proportion of his Estate, the precise rate is known at which he can certainly redeem his Iniquities.

Nay, as if these times were the sink in  
which

7 which the very dregs of all Heresies had settled, it has in our days been Publish'd, (under the colour of Philosophy) that the substance of all things whatsoever is the same; in which Assertion God and his Creatures are confounded : and that no Substance can produce another ; the consequence of which Proposition is, that every Substance in the World is self existent and Independent. Blasphemies surely never before broached among Christians; and which are as false and absurd in all Philosophy, as they are repugnant to true Religion; and as much to be abhor'd for their impiety, as they are easy to be confuted for their inconsistency with right reason.

Spinosa op.  
posthum. p.  
398.

But now since there are so many Dangerous Rocks upon which the Men of this Age are apt to Split themselves, the great Question will be by what compass we are to steer ? to which we cannot give a better answer than by proposing and recommending to serious consideration, this passage of St. Paul in our Text, which will prove an effectual Rule, whereby to discern useful Christian Doctrines from false and hurtful ones, viz. they must be according to Godli-

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ness,

ness, and that which gave occasion to St. Paul to lay down this Rule, was the several Errors contrary to the Doctrine of Christ, which had stolen into the Church in his days: all which he reproveth upon this account, that they were not according to Godliness. A list of some of these, we have in this *Epistle* he giveth a Caution to *Timothy* not to give heed to fables and endless Genealogies, which might minister Questions for witty Men to dispute upon: but not edify in the Faith, nor promote Charity, which was the end of the Commandment, He reflects upon some such Men, as having made a ship-rack of the Faith. He assureth him, the holy Spirit had expressly declared, *that in the latter times some should depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils* i. e. by the seducement of the Devil they would again revive the Pagan Religion of the worshipping of *Dæmons*.

V. 19.

C. 4.

C. 6.

Again, St. Paul reprehends and confutes another pernicious Doctrine, which had found a welcome entertainment among Servants converted to the Faith, who by the craft of false Teachers were easily led into a persuasion, that the Christian Religion had dissolved

dissolved the Bonds they before stood in to their Masters. For if their Masters were Infidels, then Christian liberty was insisted upon, Christ having made them free from their yoke : but if they were believers, than Christian brotherhood was claimed, for Christians are all brethern in Christ ; and in Consideration of this Spiritual Relation, they presumed themselves to be on the same level with their Masters.

But to the first, St. *Paul* replies, that notwithstanding their Masters were yet unconverted, they were to render them all due honour and service, least either by their haughty carriage, or disobedience, the Name of God and the Doctrin of Christ should be Blasphemed ; and to the others who had believing Masters, his answer was, that they should not despise them because they are brethern ; but rather do them service ; because they are Faithful and beloved partakers of the Benefit : not only because it was one Branch of Christian Duty, for Servants to be obedient to their Masters ; but because their Masters, whose tempers were softned by the love which the Religion of Jesus does inspire, would treat them tenderly.

derly and kindly ; and be glad of an opportunity of being beneficial to them, and this is the Doctrine which is according to Godliness.

V. 3. 4. 5.

*For if any man Teacheth otherwise: and consent not to wholsom words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine which is according to godlines, he is proud knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of Men of Corrupt minds, destitute of the Truth, supposing that gain is godliness, from such withdraw thy self.*

So dangerous a thing it is for a Christian, more to busy himself about Contentious disputes; than the Rules of an holy Life; for a doting upon Questions may betray him into that wrath and envy, which shuts men out of the Kingdom of Heaven: but it must be a continual exercise of himself according to Godliness that will carry him thither. So true also is it, that neither the Spiritual relation of Brotherhood between Christians has destroy'd the several Orders, Ranks, and Qualitys of men in civil Societys; nor that Christian liberty has taken away the obligation,

tion, which is upon Servants to be obedient to their Masters; and the Duty that is upon the People to be Subject to their Governors; this being part of the Doctrine which is according to Godliness.

But to come to a further improvement of our Text, there are these five Propositions which seem very proper and natural to be insisted on from it, and which accordingly I shall make it my business to treat of in this Discourse.

(1.) That Godliness is a fixt and certain thing, not variable according to places and times or the humors of men: but the reasons of it are Eternal and Unchangeable.

(2) That the Scope and end of the Doctrines of the Gospel is to advance Godliness, and recommend the practice of it to mankind.

(3.) That it is an Argument both of the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion, that all the Doctrines thereof are Conformable to Godliness.

(4.) That they who teach or perswade men they may be saved by their true Opinions or sound Belief, tho not accompanied with a Godly life, do defeat the very design  
of.



of the Gospel, and obstruct that influence it should have on the minds of men.

(5.) That whatsoever Doctrins are not according to Godliness, are so far from being necessary, that they cannot be true.

(1.) That Godliness is a fixt and certain thing, not variable according to places and times or the humors of men. This is apparent both from the Text, and the Reason of the thing; first of all, the Text plainly implies it, *St. Paul* requires every man should give consent to the Doctrine which is according to Godliness. What can we gather from hence, but that according to him Godliness, must be the standard and measure, by which men are to Judge of Doctrines? if a Doctrine be according to Godliness, he is to assent to it, if not according to Godliness, he is to dissent from it.

All men therefore must have one certain unvariable notion of Godliness in their minds; or else they can never know what Doctrines they are to embrace; and what to reject. But secondly, this do's more evidently follow from the notion of Godliness it self: for Godliness is nothing else but a being like God, it is a Copying out in our minds  
and



and manners, all the perfections of the Divine Nature, so far as we are capable.

Now if those qualitys and perfections in God be Eternal and unalterable, then certainly the notion of Godliness in us must be so also. It is true, if we go to the criticism of the word, this term of Godliness is sometimes used in a stricter sense, and imports no more then the worship of God properly so called; which consists in our having just and worthy apprehensions of God, and in rendring to him that Love, Thanks-giving, Honor and Adoration which is due to the Great Governor of the World, and our best Benefactor.

But in the larger sense of the word, and as it is here taken by the Apostle, Godliness is a Comprehension of all the Moral Virtues; and takes in not only acts of Religion towards God; but those of Righteousness towards our Neighbour, and of Sobriety with respect to our Selves.

In a word, It is a walking suitably to that Nature, and that Reason which God has given us, and for Gods sake. Which notion of Godliness being admitted, it cannot possibly be thought an Arbitrary thing; but must.

must be eternal and immutable; as the nature of mankind is, or rather as God is, who contrived that nature.

We may talk what we please of the indifference of Good and Evil; but the more we think, the more we shall be convinced that there is an Eternal goodness and evil in things as they fall under a Moral Consideration.

Now some actions have an agreeableness with Gods holy Nature, and some an utter incongruity with it: and if his holy Nature is always the same eternal and unchangeable, then also will those things be eternally good which have an agreement with this blessed Nature; and those eternally evil which do vary from it; thus as to love and honour God, are acts most agreeable to his perfect Nature; so will it be eternally the duty of the Creature to pay them unto him; and it is a repugnancy in terms to suppose, God can command his Creatures to hate him; or to do the least thing which is contrary to the rectitude of his Nature.

Besides there are such eternal respects and relations between things, that some actions will be ever good and some evil. We cannot  
suppose

suppose a Benefactor ; but we must acknowledge that gratitude and thanks are his due. We cannot allow a person to be Innocent, but we must grant too, that no injury or hurt ought to be done unto him.

How unreasonable then is that Opinion, which makes the Civil Law of the Magistrate the only measure of Good and Evil ? for should the Magistrate forbid me to put up Prayers to God, would therefore the service of God be Evil ? or should he Command me to kill my Father, would therefore Parricide be lawful ?

If so, then there are actions antecedently good to the Laws of the Magistrate, and dutys not alterable by them : in performance of which doth the Godly man exercise himself Day and Night.

*They are* (saies *Justin Martyr*) *(a) very acceptable to God who do those things, which are in their own Nature Universally and Eternally good.*

Οἱ τὰ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς  
καλὰ καὶ αἰώνια  
ἐν αὐτοῖς ὄντα  
καλὰ καὶ αἰώνια  
ἐν αὐτοῖς ὄντα  
Justin. Mart.  
dial cum  
Tryph. p. 263.

(2.) The Scope and end of the Doctrines of the Gospel, is to advance Godliness, and to recommend the practice of it to Mankind; it being much truer of Christs Doctrines, what was said of the *Lacedæmonian* Laws,

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That

Nie. Cragius  
de Repub. La-  
cedaem.  
p. 171.

*That it is the property of them all, to inflame mens minds with the love of virtue, and to create a contempt of empty and sensual pleasure.* To this end all the Precepts of our Lord, all his great actions, and grievous sufferings were directed. But for the further illustration and proof of this point, give me leave to offer these three things to your Consideration.

(1.) That not any of the Discourses, or Sermons of our Saviour, were made upon Subjects purely speculative. The Sermons he Preacht were to teach men to be humble, meek, pure, and peaceable; to bear reviling language patiently, and willingly to submit to Persecution for Righteousness sake; to put hypocrisy out of Countenance, and to reform such notions in Religion as were impediments to real Piety, and upheld men in wicked life. And in this Course he was carefully follow'd by his Apostles, and those who were joyned with them in planting his Religion.

Concerning the Original of the Soul, whether it be immediately Created, or infused, or deriv'd from the Parents, and the manner of its Union with the body; concerning

cerning the orders, ranks, and numbers of the Angels, and how they converse and convey their thoughts to each other; concerning the bounds, figure, and capacity of Heaven the Scholemen have written great Volumes; but the Inspired Writers have treated very sparingly; because an accurate skill in these nice speculations, and much acquaintance with them, will not make us one jot the better men; since we may have our heads full of these curious notions without advancing one step nearer Heaven, and being in the least degree. more acceptable to God.

(2.) The revelation God has made of himself in Scripture is, such, as most Conduceth to the promotion of Godliness, and of his great design of putting us upon the attainment of these qualifications which can only fit us for the Kingdom of Heaven, and are the necessary terms of our Salvation; for there we constantly find God to be set forth, as Just and Righteous in all his works, as pure and holy in all his ways: and as the rewarder only of them who love and fear him, and keep his Commandments.

Nay, God is there pleased to ascribe un-

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to himself the passions of men, love, hatred, anger, revenge, hope, grief and repentance, not that these passions are properly in God, who is wholly free from the imperfections, which cause them in us but meerly in Condescension to the weakness of our Nature, and to help the slowness of our understanding : to the end that what is there declared to be the object of Gods Love and Hatred, his Grief or Anger, might be the object of ours likewise ; and more strongly affect us. And as an Evidence of this we may Observe, that these passions hardly ever are attributed to God in Scripture, but to encourage Virtue or discourage Vice. So true is it, that the several descriptions the Bible giveth us of God are accommodated to the Doctrine of Godliness, and do tend to the advancement of it.

Now as this seems to be the only Reason why God has made some discovery of the Perfections of his blessed Nature unto us, that we should profoundly reverence him and sincerely love him, and Religiously conform our selves unto his Will ; so if we neglect to answer the ends of this glorious manifestation, God will declare at the day  
of

of Judgment, that he knows us not, as he has already declared we know not him; *he* St. John 1. c. 2. v. 4.  
*that saith he hath known him and keepeth not his Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

Upon this Argument St. Basil speaks excellently, taking his occasion from those words of our Lord. I know my sheep and am known of mine. *What do you mean by knowing? do you understand what Gods Essence is? or can you measure his greatness? no my sheep know me, that is, they hear my Voice. See then by what means you may Arrive at the knowledg of God; it is by hearing his Commands and doing them, when you have heard them. The knowledg then of God consists in the observation of his Commandments, not in a curious prying into the nature of his Essence, and the things above the World: not in the contemplations of Invisible Beings; my Sheep know me, and I know Mine. It is enough for you to know you have a good Shepherd, who hath layd down his life for the Sheep. Let this then be the bounds of your knowledg of God. But the questions that concern the immensity of the Divine Nature are dangerous to him who puts them; and can never be penetrated into, by him*

who



*who undertakes to answer them; the best cure for such is silence.*

So that knowledg and practice, how much soever they may differ in our notions of them, are in Christian Religion but two terms importing the same matter. And as they who keep not the Commandments, cannot in a Scripture sense, without a lie, pretend that they know God; so neither at the day of Judgment will Christ know them, who lived in disobedience to the great laws of his Religion, and neglected the chief instances of their Duty. Infomuch that to those who *have eaten and drank in his presence, and heard him Preach in their Streets*, and upon that score only do claime a knowledg of him, and an interest in his Death and Sufferings, he will reply, *I tell ye, I know not whence you are, depart from me, all ye Workers of iniquity.* Wherefore that man does but deceive himself, and will in the end certainly miscarry, who diligently Searches after Knowledg only that he may gratify a vain curiosity, and qualify himself to become an able Disputant in Religion; for all our knowledg will avail us nothing, unless it have an influence upon our practice,



tice, and prove serviceable to us in the reformation of our manners.

In this State then of Imperfection, and tryal of our Obedience, we need to enquire no further after the Essence of God, and study the mysteries of his incomprehensible Nature, then it may either serve to instruct us in such Instances and Cases as 'tis our Duty to imitate him, and be as conformable to him as we can ; or furnish us with Arguments that will give us courage to break through the difficulties and opposition that we may meet with in our Christian Race, and minister Patience and Comfort to us under the bitterest Persecutions we shall suffer for the sake of our Master, and because we would not do violence to our Consciences. Indeed in the life that will follow this, we shall see God as he is, and all the glories of the Divinity will lie open to our eyes.

Then in the Company of the whole Church Triumphant, of all the Saints and Angels, we shall stand round about the Throne, and for ever behold, search into, admire, and adore the infinite wisdom and goodness and Power of God ; and with the highest transport of Love and joy, we shall bless and praise  
and

and magnify the Lamb, with whose blood all our defilements are washt away, and our Robes made white; and by whose all-powerful mediation we are admitted into the glorious presence of God, and shall continue to all Eternity, as much as we are capable, to partake more and more of the Divine Perfections.

(3.) There is no fundamental Doctrine of Christianity, but an obligation naturally flows from it to some instance or other of a good Life.

If the Doctrine be, that God is the maker of Heaven and Earth, does not an obligation from thence lye upon all his Creatures to Gratitude and Praise? if the Doctrine be, that God is the great Sovereign of the World, does not a duty plainly follow, that we his Subjects are to govern our selves by his Laws? does not the Doctrine of his Infinite Goodness make it our duty to love him and imitate him; and that of his irresistible Power to dread the giving him the least offence, and to submit our selves to his pleasure? does not the Doctrine, that Truth is one of his Essential Attributes, make it our duty to believe him, and to depend  
upon

upon his promises? does not the Doctrine of his unsearchable Wisdome oblige us to give up our wills unto his, and to leave the Events of things to his wise Disposall? does not the Doctrine of his Omnipresence, his all seeing Eye engage us to have a constant and awful regard of him, and to walk circumspectly in all our paths?

The Doctrine of Gods providence being concerned not only in our most weighty affairs, but also extending even to those small things, of which we our selves take no thought, what powerful motives does it afford us against dejection, pensiveness of mind, and immoderate cares? the Doctrine of all things working together for the good of the faithful Servants of God, what a mighty obligation does it lay upon us to be contented and easy in our present condition, how much soever it may be beset with adversities and afflictions; and to take no indirect course, to use no unlawful method or means to get out of it? the Doctrine of Gods only having such a power over our Souls that he can destroy them, how plainly does it imply, that we are to dread God more than man, and to disobey man

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rather

Heb. 11. 25.

rather than God? The Doctrine of the necessity of the Sufferings and Passion of Christ, does it not make it our indispensable duty to mortify the Flesh and to crucify the Lusts thereof, and to prepare our selves *rather to suffer Affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of Sin for a Season?* and should not the Doctrine of his Resurrection and Ascension, carry our thoughts and great designs into the other World, and fix our Hearts and all our Affections upon the Treasure which is in Heaven? In a word, does not the Doctrine of a day of Judgment, in which sentence shall pass upon all men for every Thought, Word, and Deed, Oblige us, if we have the least love of our selves, and desire of our own eternal welfare, to put our Accounts in exact Order, and to break off our Sins by a timely and sincere Repentance?

And this was the method generally of the Apostles; when they have delivered a Doctrine, they presently draw an Inference from it, which is in the nature of a Precept: and where they do not express the Precept, it is ever imply'd, and easy thence to be Concluded. *Seeing all these things shall be dissolved,*

*ed, what manner of Persons ought ye to be, in all holy Conversation and Godliness ? i. e. if ye believe this Christian Doctrine of the dissolution of the World, your lives must come up to your Principle, and your faith be render'd effectual by the holiness of your Conversation; every man that hath this hope* <sup>1 Joh. 3. 3.</sup> *in him, he purifyeth himself even as he is pure; do you hope to see God, it unquestionably followes, that you are to endeavour to be like him, by imitating his purity ? if ye then be Risen with Christ seek those things* <sup>Col. 3. 1.</sup> *which are above, i. e. if ye believe Christs Resurrection, and as believers of it have been Baptized into a profession of the Christian Faith, then it becomes you to mind those things which will procure your own Resurrection likewise. As ye therefore have receiv'd* <sup>C. 2. v. 6.</sup> *Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk ye in him; if ye have receiv'd the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, let not your behaviour carry any thing in it unfutable to his holy Doctrine, but be ye mindful to Govern your selves by the Practical Rules therein contain'd.*

But against the point I am now upon, some will be apt to object, that one great Doctrine of our Religion, the mystery of the

holy *Trinity*, does not seem at all to concern a good life; now tho it may so seem to them who slightly examin things, yet those who shall be at the pains more exactly to consider this Doctrine will be otherwise perswaded. For when we consider God so loved the World as to send his only begotten son, to save all them from perishing who shall believe on him, does not this lay the highest obligation upon us which is possible to make all the returns of praise, and love, and gratitude, and obedience?

When we consider there was that aversion in the divine nature to sin, that God would not pardon it before ample satisfaction was made at the Cost of the blood and life of his own Son, can there be any argument in the World more effectual to deter a man from sin, and if he have any ingenuity, to make him abhor the thoughts of it? when we consider that this very same Son of God, who was the brightness of his Fathers glory, and express image of his person, is now our high Priest, and has entered the holy of holies, and does daily offer up our prayers to God, and constantly there intercede with him on our behalf; will not this be apt to  
create

create in us a mighty confidence to address our selves to the throne of Heaven in all our wants, and strong hopes that God will never forsake us in distress ?

When we consider the holy Spirit has consecrated our bodies, and made them the Temples wherein he will vouchsafe to dwell, (a) (which is the peculiar privilege and mercy of the Gospel) is there not a deep engagement thereby laid upon us, to prepare these bodies for his reception, by keeping them pure from intemperance and filthy Lusts for fear we greive this holy guest, and cause him to desert such unclean habitations, and vex him that he turn to be our enemy ?

And so I hope the sense of the 2d. Point is cleared, and the truth of it establisht, that it is the design of the Doctrines of the Gospel to advance Godliness, and that there is an aptness, and direct tendency in them all to enforce the practice of it upon Christians, this notion the Ancients had of Christian Religion when they stiled it an (a) *institution according to Godliness* (b) *and an institution that comprehends all virtue*; and accordingly the first Christians ( as *Minut. Felix* observes) (d) *were distinguisht from other men not by any*

(a) *Vid. Rupertum de Glorificatione Trinitatis Lib. 14. c. 11.*

(a) Κατ' ἑωσὶ βίαν ποιεῖσθαι.  
(b) πανδύπειον ἐκείνην.  
Euseb. de mon. Evang. P. 12. § 24.

(d) Non tam notaculo Corporis quam modestiæ & innocentie. signa. Min. Felix.

thing



(c) *Nec aliunde  
invisibiles quam  
de emendati-  
one virtutum  
Pristinorum,  
Tertul. ad  
Scapulam c. 2.*

*thing peculiar in their habit and dress; but by their innocence and modesty. (c) There was no other mark of a new convert, but his having forsaken his old vices.*

(3.) It is an Argument both of the Truth and excellency of the Christian Religion, that the Doctrines of it are according to Godliness. Godliness (as we have shewn) is the sum of the duties of natural Religion: and what duty is there in natural Religion, but in the code of the Royal Christian Law it is more clearly propounded, more fully explained, more strongly confirm'd?

Now what greater Argument is there for the truth of the Doctrines of any Religion, than their agreeableness to the common sentiments of mankind? or what more manifest proof of the excellency of the precepts of it, than their harmony with the Laws of Nature? for the most material objections against any Instituted Religion, are either that its Principles are contradictory to clear Reason, or its Duties repugnant to Natural Laws. Since those Principles can not be true which contradict right Reason, nor those Precepts good which are repugnant to the Laws of Nature.

For



For if we cannot be certain of the truth of those things, for which there is plain and manifest Reason, we cannot be certain of the truth of any thing; and it must be granted, that natural Religion is the Foundation upon which all revealed Religion does stand; because from natural Light is fetcht the proof of the Existence of God, which revealed Religion does always suppose.

Now there is nothing commanded in our Religion but what becomes the perfections of the Divine Nature, and agrees with those Eternal Laws which flow from it: there is nothing required of us but what futes with the Native Principles of our own Souls, and our truest Interest: there is nothing propounded in our Religion, as a point of Faith, but we have sufficient Reason to believe it; there is nothing exacted as a Duty, but we have exceeding good motives to doe it. We may find the great duties of our Religion all writ upon our own Nature. And it was well said by *Tritbemius* in his Answer to *Maximilian* the Emperor. (a) *That of all the Sects and Religions in the World, none approach'd so near to the Laws of Nature,*

(a) *Est Christi-  
stiana Religio  
inter omnium  
Mortalium  
seclis naturae  
legibus vicini-  
or, & magis  
conformis ha-  
bitu & prox-  
ima, &c.  
Joan. I. item.  
Praefat. lib.  
Octo question.*

nor

*nor were so conformable to them as the Christian Religion.*

Neither is there any thing that will contribute so much towards the accomplishment of our natural capacities, as a life conformable to the Laws of our Religion; since as God designed Religion to advance our nature, and make us more nearly resemble him; so prophaness and irreligion set God and us at the greatest conceivable distance, and turn man, upon whom the divine Image was stamp'd, into the shape of the Devil or of the beast that Perish.

Thus should you suppose the contrav<sup>r</sup> of every Christian Law enacted, that insted of forgiving Enemys, reconciling our selves to our adversaries, and shewing mercy to the distressed, we should be commanded to revenge every little injury unto Death, to be implacably malicious where we have had a quarrel, and cruel even to extremity with the poor and unfortunate, would not mankind be chang'd into a race of Wolves and Tigers, shall I say, or become a new order of Devils incarnate?

And suppose also that we were injoyned to be false to our words, unjust in our dealing,

ing, treacherous to our trust, would not all civil societies be dissolv'd ? all commerce destroy'd ? and the World become a great den of Thievs and Robbers ? if it was required of us to eat always to gluttony and to drink to excess, would the effect of our obedience be any other, than the spoiling our health, the besotting our rational faculties, and the transforming the Children of Men into a Herd of Swine ?

So little reason have we to complain of the Commandments of God as either difficult, or grievous, when it is evident, that were we to receive laws in the matter and all the circumstances of them contrary to those with which God now Governs the World, we should cry out of our duty as intolerable, and sink under our burdens as not being able to bear them.

And so much cause is there to bless God for ruling the World by Righteous Laws and having given us a Religion, which our own faculties being judges, and we trust and rely upon in all other Cases, is most reasonable and excellent ; As being perfective of our nature, and Worthy of the wisdom of God who contrived it, as being framed with great Condescension to the infirmities

of man, and carrying a plaine conformity in it to the attributes of God.

(4.) That they who Teach and Perswade Men they may be Saved by their true Opinions or sound Belief, tho not Accompanied with a Godly life, do defeat the very design of the Gospel and Obstruct that Influence it should have on the minds of men.

Christianity is a Covenant wherein as God has obliged himself to bestow rewards, so he has bound man too, to yield Obedience. How absurd then is their opinion who think a Covenant does not bind on both sides, how hurtful is their mistake who teach Christians, there is no service required on their part in this new Covenant? what ground or colour could there be to think the Religion instituted by Jesus should consist in the belief only of a set of Propositions, without intermeddling in the affairs of Life, and the Government of our will and affections, when all his Sermons were so many Lectures upon virtue, and at the last day he will judg us by our Works? when he has Etablisht so many rules for the ordering of our thoughts, words, and actions in every Condition; and required a sincere, though  
not

not a Perfect observance of them all.

*We are Commanded to Watch and Pray, to fight the good fight of Faith, to strive that we may enter in at the strait Gate, to work out our own Salvation with fear and trembling, to run that we may obtain, and to take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence.*

These Phrases contain a Discription of the Dutys of a Christian, and the degrees wherein they are required of him. They shew he is to work as well as believe; and that what he does must be withal his might, and with as much perfection as he can; his Life must be Productive of much, and the best fruits; the nature of his Christian Inployment does make it Necessary, that he pursue it with great Intention of Mind and Earnestness of will, and that he put to all his Strength. The Christians duty is represented under the Metaphor of a Race to convince him, that he must strip and free himself of whatever does Clogg or Burthen him, and use his utmost Speed, and not Slacken his pace till he has obtained, that is, till he comes to the end of the Race and his Life. his Duty also is exprest by a narrow Way, and strait Gate, to shew that his cal-

ling is attended with great difficulties, and that they are only to be broke through by Zealous Contention; he that will enter must strive. The reward indeed which is proposed to Christians is very tempting, and of most inestimable Value; it is a Kingdom; but he that sets himself to rest, and folds his hands shall never be the better for it: for that Kingdom shall only be taken and possess'd by them who violently invade it.

Nothing can be perform'd without Gods assistance who works in men to will and to do; but then it is only in those who Concur with him, and do work out their own Salvation with Care and Concernment, with fear and trembling. Christ has purchased for us a liberty, as to Places and Times, as to the choice and difference of meats: but not a liberty to omit our Duty, or do the least sin, he has freed our shoulders from the burden of *Moses* Law: but not discharged our obligation to any one Moral Virtue, or Law of nature. The Faith that will carry a man to Heaven must be a Faith that Worketh by love; and love is the keeping the Commandments.

So

So the holy Scripture declares, so the Primitive Fathers taught.

St. Ignatius makes Faith and Love the whole Duty of a Christian; (a) *Faith the beginning, Love the end*; (b) *Faith the guide, Love the way*: and he hardly ever recommends the one but in the Company of the other. (c) *Faith preceeds, Fear builds, Love makes perfect.*

(5) That whatsoever Doctrines are not according to Godliness, are so far from being necessary, that they cannot be true. For if it be the Scope and End of the Gospel to advance Godliness; and that it is an argument both of the Credibility and excellency of it, that it does so, as I have before prov'd, then it plainly follows, if we suppose the Doctrine of the Gospel to be a true Doctrine, that all such Opinions as are either contrary to the Godliness, or do disserve the interests of it, can neither be necessary Doctrines, nor true ones.

Seeing then the truth of this Proposition is evident from the foregoing discourse; I shall only now make it my business briefly to reflect on some of the many ill opinions, which tho they have been taught for sound and

(a) Εὐὲ ἔχῃ  
τὴν ἀρετήν, καὶ  
τὴν ἀγάπην,  
καὶ ἔστιν ἀρετὴ  
τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.  
Ignat. Ep. ad  
Ephes.

(b) Ἡ δὲ  
ἀγάπη ἀρετὴ  
καὶ ὁδὸς  
καὶ ἀντικείμενον  
τῆς ἀρετῆς.  
ibid.

(c) Ἡ ἀρετὴ  
καὶ ὁδὸς  
καὶ ἀντικείμενον  
τῆς ἀρετῆς.  
Clem. Alex.  
Strom. lib. 2.  
p. 384.  
Credam, dili-  
gam Deum &  
proximum, mi-  
hi cetera non  
sunt necessaria;  
Tertul. de  
jesum. c. 2.



and Orthodox ; yet, upon examination, will appear not to be according to Godliness.

(1.) The first I take notice of is that, of

(a) That God is the Author not of those actions alone, in and with which sin is, but of the very Pravity, Avarice, Anomie, Irregularity, and Sinfulness it self, which is in them ; yea, that God hath more hand in mens sinfulness than they themselves. Archer's *Comfort for Believers*, p. 36, 37. vid. Dr. Pierce's *Preface to his Discourse of the Nature of Sin*.

Neither do I see how Dr. Twiss can be excused from this Imputation : his words are these. *Fateatur Deum non modo ipsius operis Peccaminosi ; sed Intentionis malæ Authorem esse, &c. Twiss Vindicat. Gratia, p. 36. Quæcumq; Deus Præcivit fore, illa voluit & decrevit, at Peccatum Præcivit fore, ergo Peccatum voluit & decrevit.* Joan. Maccovii *Colleg. de Prædestin.* p. 16.

*Er certe hec jammos Theologos quædam, præcipue Piscatorem & I wistum. eo adduxit, ut Naturam permissionis Dei considerantes, non solum Deum peccatum velle statuerint, verum etiam aliqui eorum durioribus Phrasibus quoddam Commune Opinionem, veritatis tamen usi sint : nimirum Deum Peccato indigere, sive opus habere ex hypothese decreti illustrationis Gloriæ & Manifestationis Misericordiæ & justitiæ suæ, &c. Joan. Szydiowii Vindic. question. p. 128.*

Gods being the Author of Sin, (a) which has been expressly maintained by some men. Now it is not possible that Opinion should be true, which is inconsistent with the Reason of mankind, or manifestly repugnant to the Attributes of God : for all Controversies in Religion must be decided by Reason, either from the Principles of Natural Religion, or Divine Revelation ; and from the Principles of Natural Religion it is evident that there can be nothing in a Religion which comes from God, that is repugnant to his Essential Attributes, that is, to himself.

Now that God should be the Author of Sin, that is the Author of what does offend and dishonour him, is very absurd and unreasonable, that he should be Author of that which he has so often and solemnly declared,

clared, he does abhor and detest thwarts with the attribute of his truth: and that he should be the efficient cause of all the wickedness, which is done, and he will so severely Punish, is a gross repugnancy not only to his infinite goodness, but his justice it self. Such Opinions as these deprive God of the holiness essential to his Nature; and (g) which even by the Gentiles unassisted with the light of the Gospel in their *Praiers* and *Devotions* was constantly ascribed to him.

(g) In *Precationibus* DI.  
*plerumque sancti*  
*appellati. P.*  
*Merulae Com-*  
*ment. in Ennius*  
*Fragment. p.*  
*106.*  
*Brittonii for-*  
*muli. lib. 1. p. 44.*

(2.) The Doctrine of irrespèctive decrees cannot be according to Godliness; because it takes away the ground of all the motives to a Godly Life. For if a man be included within the decree of Election, the greatest sins will not Damn him; and if he be left out of it, the most holy Life cannot put him in a capacity of Salvation.

Again, if God has decreed to save or reprobate men without regard had to either their good or evil Lives, then they will be saved or lost without any respect had of either: for what God has decreed, that certainly will come to pass; but to say that Men shall have sentence pass upon them to

go either to Heaven or Hell, without any consideration of their Faith and Obedience on one hand, or their infidelity and impenitence on the other, is to make a day of Judgment unnecessary; and repugnant to that justice according to which God has declared he will then proceed. *We must all appear before the judgment of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

2 Cor. 5. 10.

(3.) Among these ill Opinions we may rank that of the Popish Casuists, who teach that the (a) *precept of loving God*, is in it self *only Obligatory* at the very point of *Death*, altho we be always under the protection of Gods unwearied Providence, and do every moment that we breath receive good at his hand; tho there is no day of our Lives but we offend, and stand in fresh need of his mercy; yet these Licentious Casuists, to say no worse of 'em, are of opinion, that it is a (b) *sufficient* return of Gratitude to God, for the infinite and unspeakable Acts of his love to us, if in the *end of our Lives* we express one act of *Love* towards him. But there needs no other Confutation in this Auditory of

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(a) Et illam amplectuntur non ignobiles Magistri atq; Doctores, quando Defendunt, Preceptionem Charitatis, per se, tantum obligare in Articulo mortis. Amadæi Guimenii Opuscul. p. 119.

(b) Putat Viques sufficere, si diligimus Deum in fine vite. Elicobar. Theol. Moral. p. 63.

an Opinion so impious, and directly contrary to the first and greatest Commandment of the Evangelical Law, than the bare rehearsal of it.

(4.) Another Doctrine to be reflected upon, is that, which Teaches and Directs us to the use of such Means for the promotion of Christian Religion, as are destructive of the ends of it. The end of Christian Religion is to make men sincere in what they profess, true to their word, and upright in their dealings; and therefore they who by lying and perjury, equivocation and reserves, endeavor to propagate the Religion of our Blessed Savior, do by the means they use, subvert the end they pretend to serve. The design of Christian Religion is to teach men Peace and Subjection to all lawful Authority, therefore they who would instil Principles of Sedition and Rebellion, in order to the work of Reformation, do defile and corrupt that pure Religion, which they make such a shew of reforming.

The end of Christian Religion is to render men harmless, kind and Charitable one to another, therefore they who Condemn mens bodies to the stake and fire, in order

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to refine their Minds ? and cut their Throats, to save their Souls, instead of doing service to the institution of Christ, they bring the utmost slander and disgrace upon it, that possibly they can. No we must not doe evil that good may come of it, we may not make use of unlawful means, to bring about an honest end. God in no Case will allow it ; neither can true Religion ever be reduced to such extremity, as to stand in need of it.

But the time not allowing, that I should further pursue this point, or take any more of the Doctrines into consideration, which are not according to Godliness : I shall beg leave to conclude the whole discourse, with some application of it to our selves, and the unhappy times, into which we are fallen ; times wherein so many Errors in Faith ; so many vices in Practice have prevailed contrary to the Doctrine of Godliness.

And what Guide can we take ; what Method may we use, to rectifie our Judgments, and recover our virtue ? to remove our present evils ; and to avert the calamities we all fear ? it will be in vain to search for  
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the causes, or the cures of our miseries in the Politics, or among the Stars : when they are, in great Part, lodged within our own breasts, and there to be found.

Nations and Kingdoms have their growths and declensions, their rise and their periods, as well as particular Persons : but with this difference, that they never waste and decline before the temperance, and the modesty, and the innocence, and the honesty of their Inhabitants have first so done.

When an universal corruption has overspread the manners of a Nation, then the disease will come to a dangerous *Crisis* ; its Condition will be desperate, and such as all wise and good men must deplore : not only the Reputation, Fame, and Glory thereof will be much obscur'd ; but the very life and being of it will be highly endanger'd.

When a long Custom of sinning, has taken from men the very sense of their guilt ; and they are so deeply enslaved to their Lusts, as to be in love with the fetters that confine them ; when the distemper has prevailed so much upon the vital parts, that no desire longer remains in the Patient of Recovering,

then all hopes will be past, unless a speedy Remedy can be apply'd.

And this Remedy every man by the grace of God has in his own power ; which is by repentance to turn from the evil of his ways ; and without all further delay to make hast to keep Gods Commandments : this is the only Course, whereby he may save himself ; and do as much, as in him lies, to preserve his Country.

For it is neither force of Armes, nor a multitude of Laws, that without a thoro reformation in the Lives of Men can recover a sick and languishing Kingdom.

Now if every one would be as Zealously concern'd, and as really painful and laborious to approve himself to God by a Conscientious performance of all the unquestionable Conditions which are required to make a man a true Christian, as he is to recommend himself to his own party ; there would soon be less faction and turbulence, and more love and Religion among us : and we should not thus be divided and subdivided into such a number of little Sects, who ought all to be closely united in one body for the defence of our Reform'd Religion against the common Enemy.

If



If insted of being so apt to censure or misrepresent the designs and actions of our Governors, which we seldom fully know, and often quite mistake, and by which means their hearts are hardned against, and their affections estranged from the People; and the just Reverence which the People owes them lost, or abated; and so the management of Public affairs render'd in a manner unpracticable; every man would do his part to promote Peace, and Virtue, and the cherishing a good understanding among us, what a turn would this make in the condition of things? what a visible stop would this put to our growing fears and jealousies? and our Ears would no more be grated with terrifying stories, and complaints, after men were once earnestly busy in procuring the Public good and quiet?

If insted of inventing names to distinguish, and bespatter men; and then spightfully fastning them one upon another: if instead of narrowly prying into the faults of others; and the seeing them all double, or representing them as great again as they are; it being too common to charge the things done ignorantly  
upon

upon men as their wilful crimes; to interpret their meer mistakes for acts of malice; and to add something of our own to every bad report of 'em.

If instead of raking in every kennel to find proper Materials to blacken and vilifie each other, by which means an Infinite Scandal is cast upon that pure and peaceable Religion we profess, and the powerful efficacy of its Doctrins hindred, not only among

our selves, but among Infidels (as has been (a) often sadly complained of by those who have endeavoured their Conversion) we would all take a True and Faithful survey of our own Condition: and heartily beg the Pardon of God and our Neighbour

for all the injuries we shall find, we have done to both: and also humbly implore Gods Grace, and Joyn to it our earnest endeavours, that in the time to come, our Faith may be sound, and our manners pure; these changes would prove the best *Expedients*, to recal that Tranquility and Peace, all that love and respect, all that good will, mutual

(a) *Verum nihil plano majori est impedimento, quam nostratiam Christianorum (quos Eclmici prælucere ad omnem justitiam ac Castitatem oportuerat) tanto Nomini ac Professioni minime consentanea quotidiane vitæ documenta: neq; enim tantum spectata Paucorum innocentia & virtus adstruit Evangelio fidem; quantum insignis multorum, & notissimi ferè cuiusq; avaritia & improbitas admittit. P. Martini Hist. Indic. lib. 6. p. 276.*

mutual trust and confidence, which at any time heretofore our prosperous Nation has been blest withal; and I am sure *no others without these* can.

How often has God in a Fatherly way admonisht us, that he might not smight us? how often has he given us some slight wounds, to the end we might avoid the fatal strokes of his justice? how often has he laid his gentle Chastisements upon us, that we might take care to escape being buried under the ruins which his terrible judgments are wont to bring upon a Kingdom?

And shall none of the various methods God has used work a change, and real amendment in us? shall the mighty things he has done for us, and the tender care he has ever had of us be all in vain?

If neither his clemency will invite us to consider, nor his severity awaken us out of our ungrounded security it must prove fatal to us. May then the threatening dangers affright and perswade us; may the multitude of the Divine Mercies allure us; may the secret motions of the Holy Spirit excite us to seek the Lord while he may be found, before the acceptable time pass away; and his injured and long abused

fed patience change into implacable fury.

May that Zeal we bear for the best Religion, and a Church purely Reform'd, and of all others coming nearest to the Primitive Pattern, which so extremely suffers by so general a decay of Piety, and the increase of Schisms, and Parties, and Factions; may the love we bear to our Country, whose overthrow is threatned by the wickedness of its Inhabitants; may the care of our own Souls, which will everlastingly perish, if we do not every one truly Repent, prevail upon us to return unto God, and our Duty.

In a word, may all these Considerations together prevail upon us forthwith to take up firm and steddy resolutions to conform our own wills, in all things, unto the Divine Will; to govern our thoughts and deeds by the laws and example of our blessed Savior; to subdue every lust and unruly passion, and to make us strictly purpose never again, to do any thing to the dishonor of the great God that made us, tho in the smallest instance; and where we are strongly tempted to it by the greatness either of the profit or danger.

*FINIS.*